

MARVEL

#9

**DAVID
SLINEY
KEITH**

BEN REILLY:

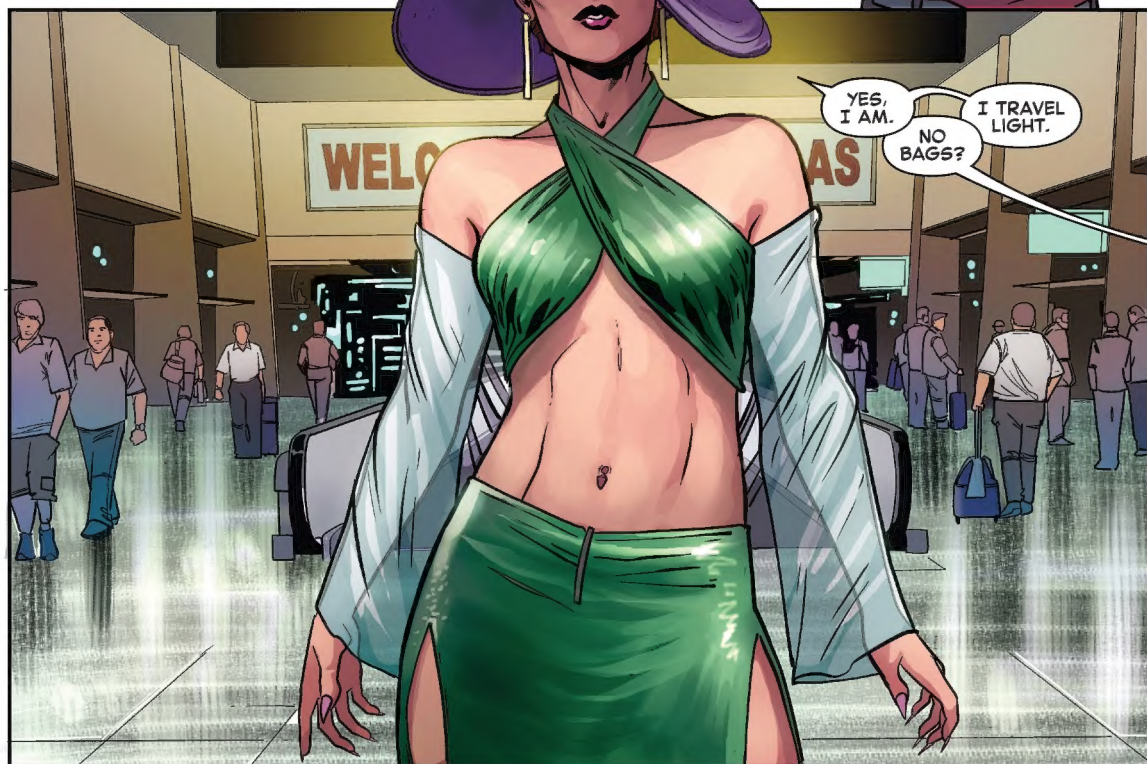
THE SCARLET SPIDER





YOU'RE
HERE FOR MS.
PLOTNICK?

THAT'S
WHAT THE SIGN
SAYS, MA'AM.
ARE YOU
HER?



YES,
I AM.

I TRAVEL
LIGHT.

NO
BAGS?



OKAY,
THEN. CAR'S
PARKED OUTSIDE
THE TERMINAL.
LET'S GO.



BY ALL
MEANS.

EVER
BEEN TO
VEGAS?

OH. YES.
SEVERAL
TIMES.

AND IS
THIS TRIP
BUSINESS OR
PLEASURE?

OH,
A BIT OF
BOTH.



SO, MY DISPATCHER SAYS YOU'RE STAYING AT THE PALACE. WANNA GO STRAIGHT THERE...?

WHO'S THAT PICTURE ON YOUR DASH-BOARD?

OH. THAT'S MY ELLIE. SHE WAS MY WIFE.

DIVORCED?

DIED. STUPID DRUNK DRIVER.

I'M SORRY. PERHAPS YOU'LL SEE HER AGAIN.



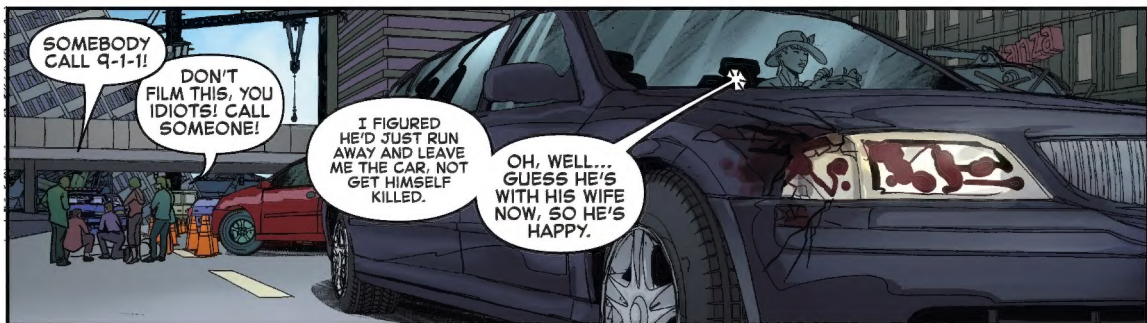
WHAT'S THAT SUPPOSED TO ME--?



MISS ME?

AAAAAAAAHHH!





Years ago, Miles Warren, one of Peter Parker's college professors, stole a sample of Peter's genetic material and used it to create a perfect clone of Spider-Man. With all of Peter's memories, the clone fled. Created, not born, and without an identity of his own, he gave himself a new name and made his own way in the world as...



BEN REILLY: **THE SCARLET SPIDER**

Captain America's Secret Empire has fallen,
but Las Vegas--adopted home of Ben Reilly, the
Scarlet Spider -- lies in ruins.

In the weeks since his arrival, Ben has
been working with Cassandra Mercury,
owner and operator of a casino called
MERCURY RISING, which has been
providing refuge to those displaced by
the attack on Vegas.

But when the seemingly resurrected
Hornet--an alter ego that once belonged to
none other than the Amazing Spider-Man --
attacked a convoy delivering food to the casino,
Reilly had no choice but to intervene...

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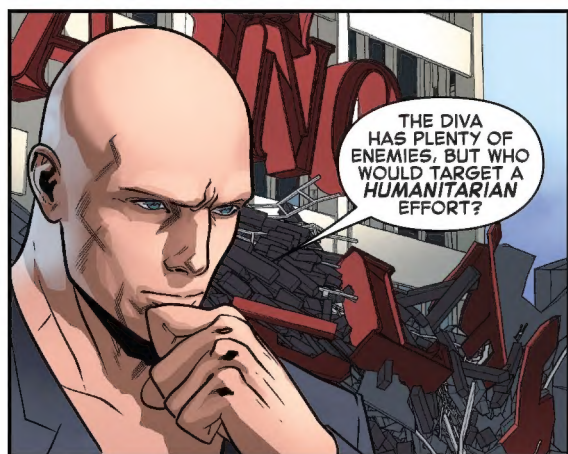
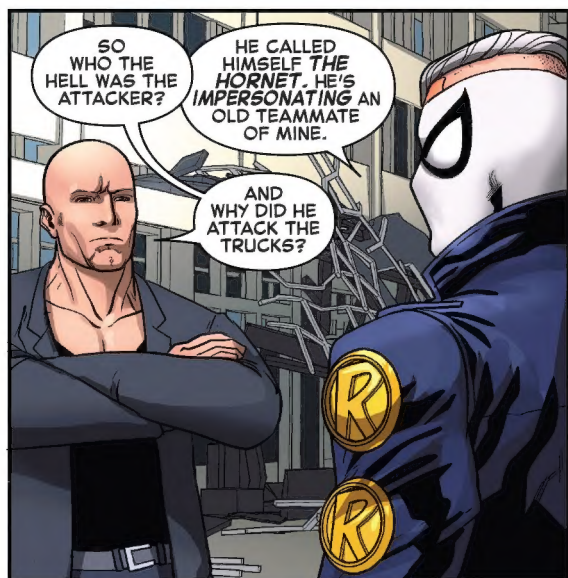
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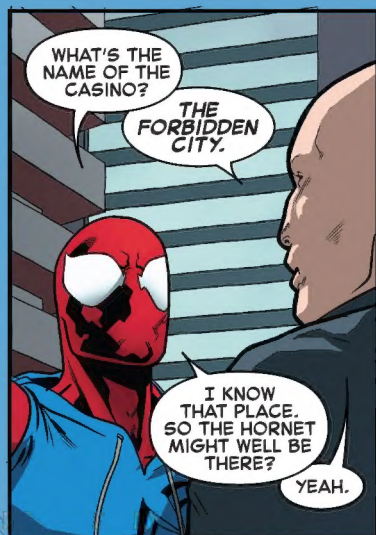
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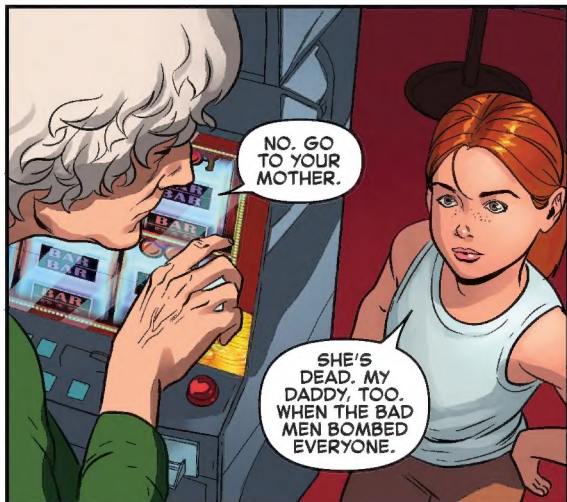
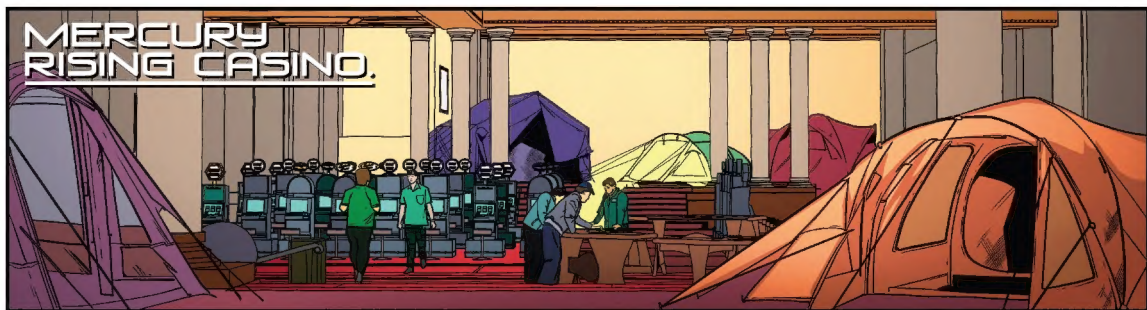


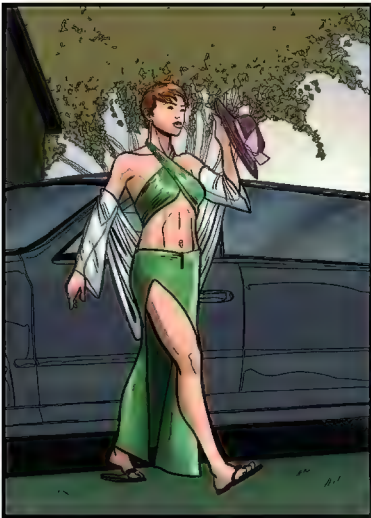


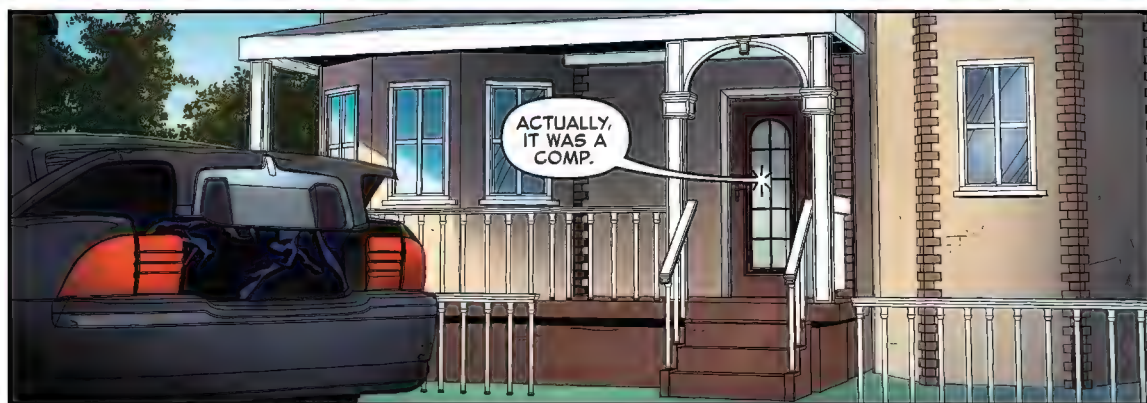
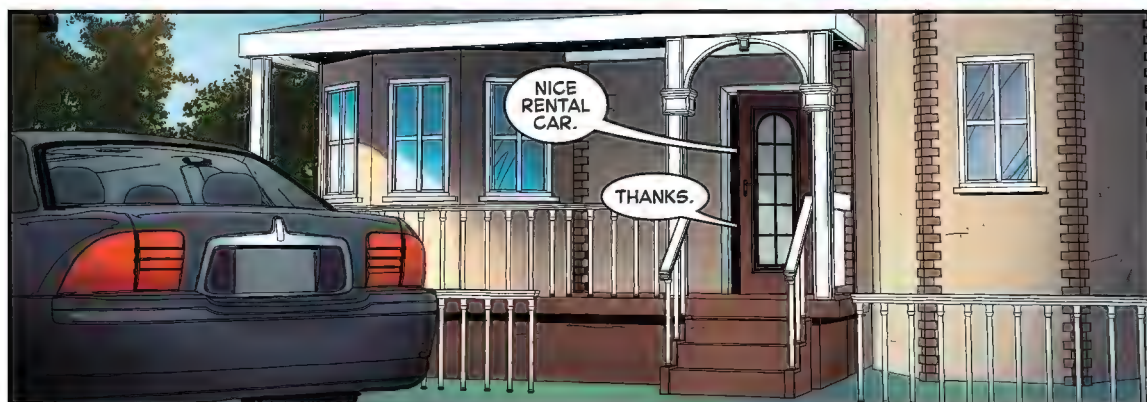
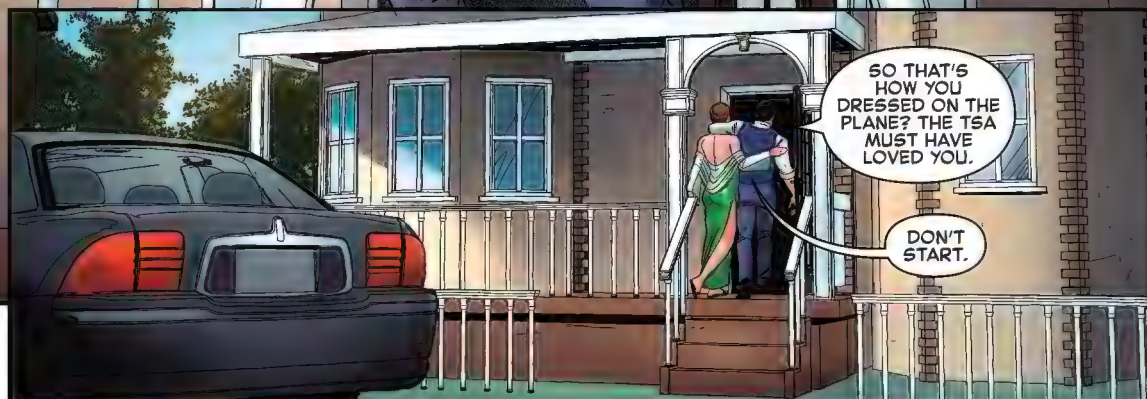




MERCURY RISING CASINO.









SO WHAT
ARE YOU DOING
IN VEGAS, ANYWAY?
CHASING DOWN
YOUR OLD
PAL?

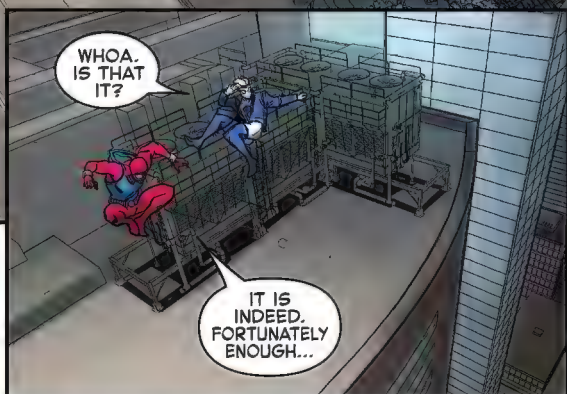
NO, NOT
AT ALL. I CAME
HERE BECAUSE I
HEARD THAT CRIME
WAS SKYROCKETING,
AND I DIDN'T KNOW
THERE WERE ANY
HEROES HERE.



IT WAS PURE
COINCIDENCE
THAT I SHOWED
UP WHEN YOU
WERE FIGHTING
THE HORNET.

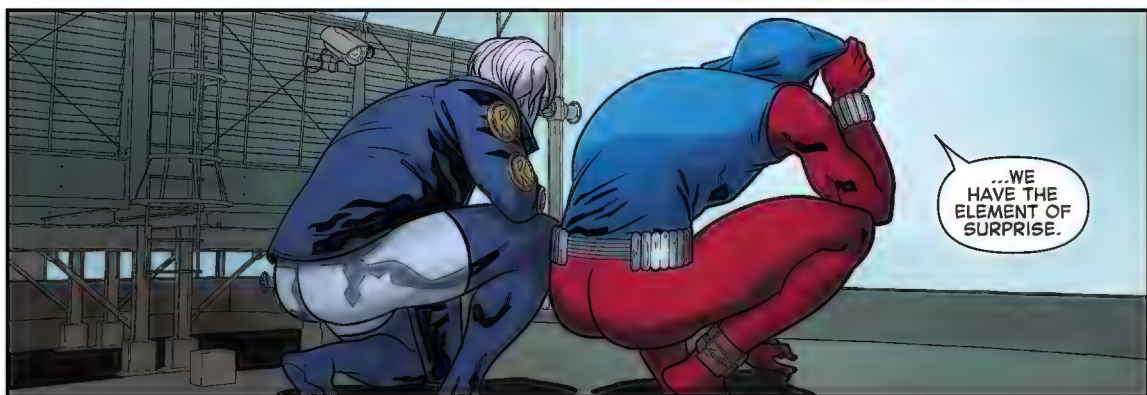
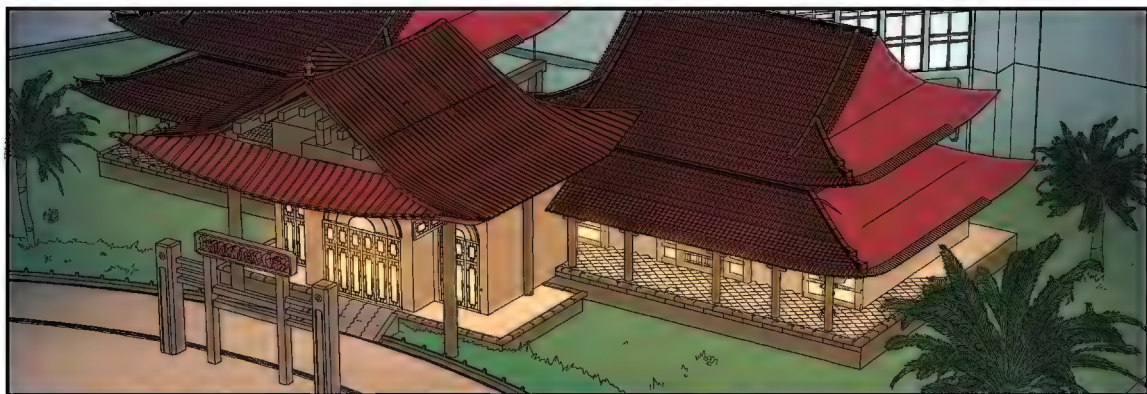
COINCIDENCE?

YUP.

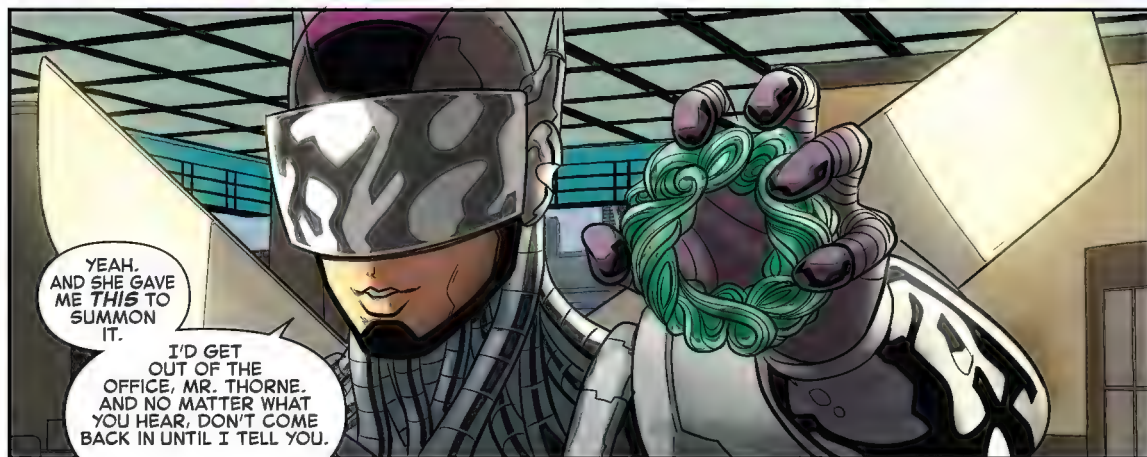


WHOA.
IS THAT
IT?

IT IS
INDEED.
FORTUNATELY
ENOUGH...



...WE
HAVE THE
ELEMENT OF
SURPRISE.





SO...
WHAT ARE
WE DOING JUST
STANDING HERE?
LET'S GO.

YEAH,
WELL, THERE'S
A PROBLEM
WITH THAT.

WHAT
KIND OF
PROBLEM?

I WANT
TO KNOW WHY
YOU'RE LYING
TO ME.

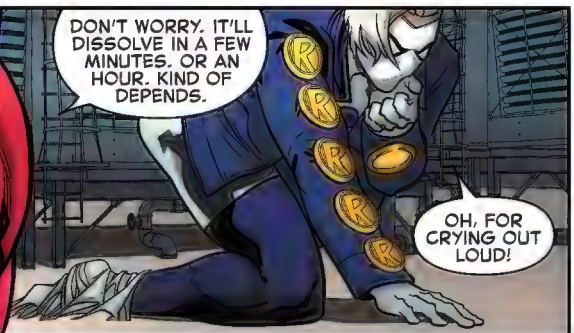
LYING?
I'M NOT
LYING!

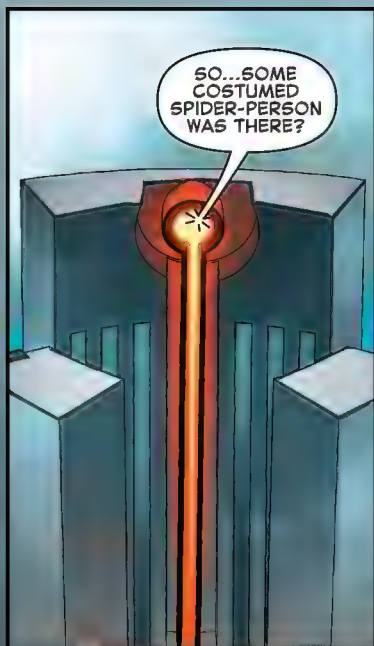
THERE'S NO
WAY YOUR BEING
HERE IS JUST A
COINCIDENCE. I DON'T
KNOW WHETHER
YOU'RE ACTUALLY
ON HORNET'S SIDE
OR A THIRD
PARTY'S.

YOU'RE
NUTS!

I HEAR
THAT A LOT.
STAY HERE.

THERE'S
NO WAY
THAT I'M--







POST 3,
ANYTHING BY
THE ROOFTOP
GAMING
SUITE?

NO SIGN OF
ANY SPIDER-
PEOPLE.



BUT
THERE
IS--

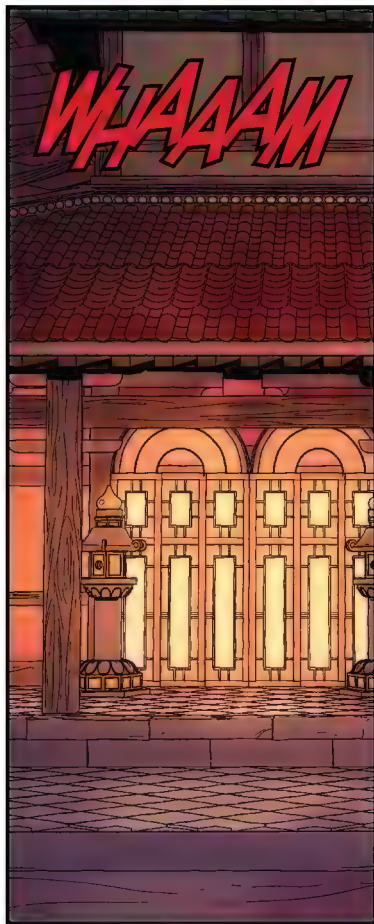
WHU--?

POST 3?
COME IN,
POST 3. YOU
THERE?

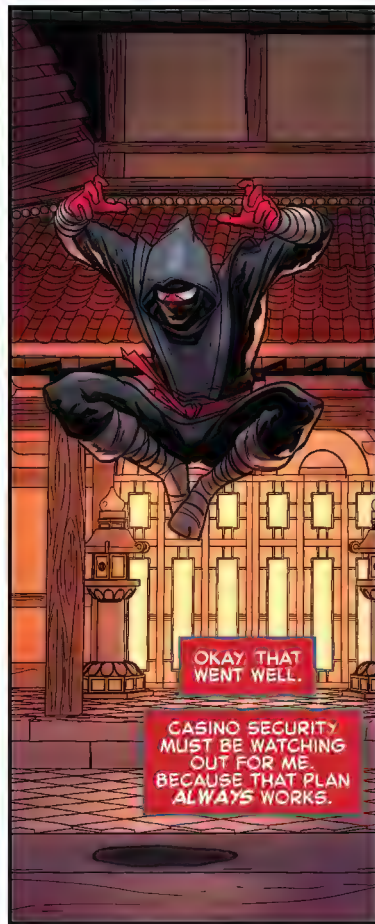
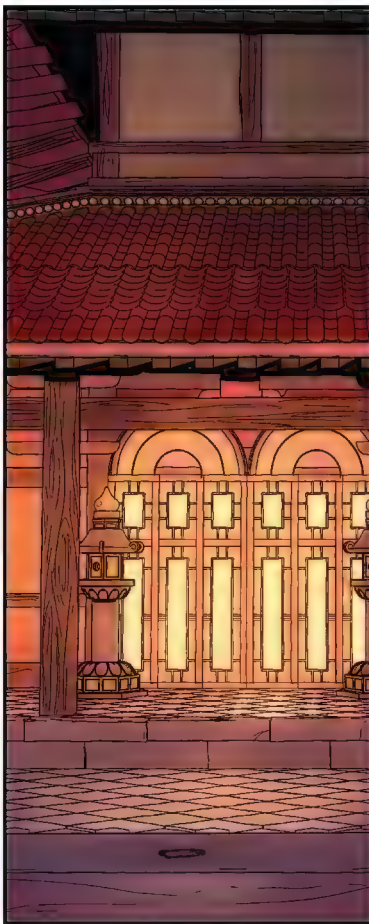


AHH!

POST 3 IS
NON-RESPONSIVE.
PROBABLY A DEAD
RADIO OR SOMETHING.
CAN SOMEONE GO
CHECK IT OUT?



WHAAAM



OKAY THAT
WENT WELL.

CASINO SECURITY
MUST BE WATCHING
OUT FOR ME.
BECAUSE THAT PLAN
ALWAYS WORKS.

HMM. NOW I JUST HAVE TO GET TO THORNE'S OFFICE. OBVIOUSLY I NEED SOME CLEVER CONTRIVED WAY TO FIGURE OUT WHERE IT IS.



EXCUSE ME, WHICH WAY TO MR. THORNE'S OFFICE?

DOWN THIS WAY, FIRST LEFT, AT THE END OF THE HALLWAY.

THANKS.

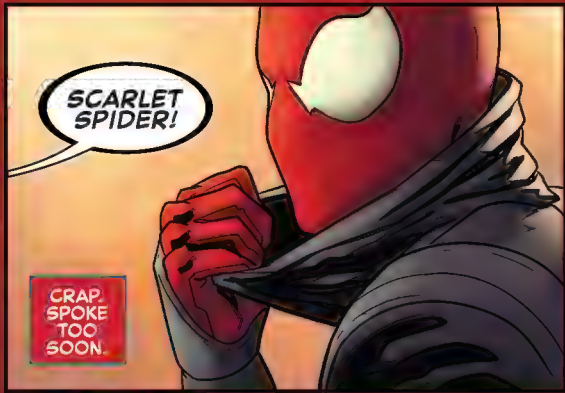


WOW. SOMETIMES THINGS GO FAR MORE EASILY THAN I'D THINK POSSI--



SCARLET SPIDER!

CRAP. SPOKE TOO SOON.

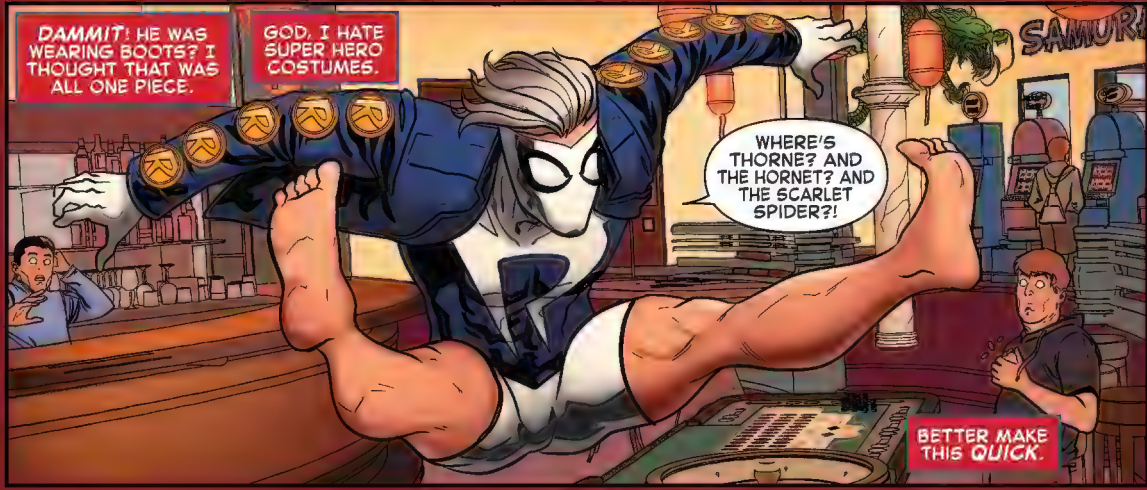


DAMMIT! HE WAS WEARING BOOTS? I THOUGHT THAT WAS ALL ONE PIECE.

GOD. I HATE SUPER HERO COSTUMES.

WHERE'S THORNE? AND THE HORNET? AND THE SCARLET SPIDER?!

BETTER MAKE THIS QUICK.





WAAAM

THE SCARLET SPIDER! I'M AFRAID I'LL HAVE TO ASK YOU TO LEAVE MR. THORNE'S OFFICE. YOU DON'T HAVE AN APPOINTMENT.

YEAH, YOU'RE HILARIOUS.

FZZZZT

WHOA!

I'VE OFFICIALLY LOST COUNT OF HOW MANY TIMES MY SPIDER-SENSE HAS SAVED MY LIFE. LET'S JUST CALL THIS ONE NUMBER 85.327.

URKKKHH!

WHERE THE HELL DID THAT COME FROM?!

FZZZZT

STAND STILL, DAMN YOU!



WHEN YOU'RE DEAD.



I THOUGHT SPIDER-FOLK DON'T KILL.

I'M AN INDEPENDENT THINKER.

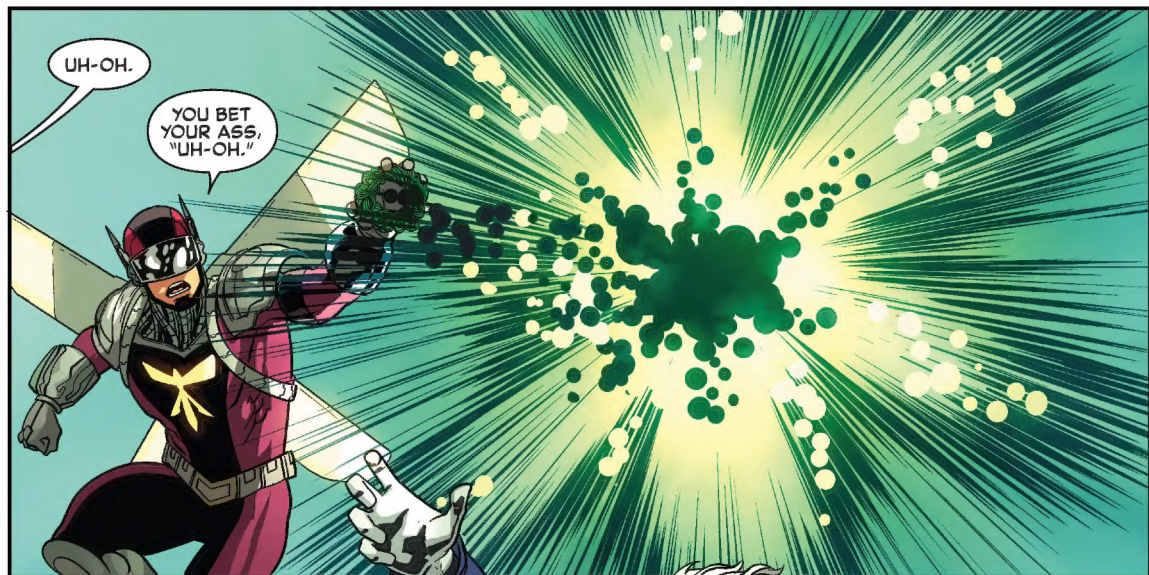


HOW NICE FOR YOU.

STOP SCREWING AROUND WITH HIM.

TAKE HIM DOWN HARD AND FAST. AND THEN FIND HIS BOSS.







TRUST ME,
GENTLEMEN.
THERE'S NOTHING
HOLY ABOUT
IT.

TO BE
CONTINUED!

SCARLET LETTERS

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HELLO, CLONE-HEADS!

And welcome to **MARVEL LEGACY**, the Marvel Comics free-for-all of the fall, and **BEN REILLY: THE SCARLET SPIDER** is getting in on the action!

For those of you wondering who the past few issues' costumed guest stars have been, look no further than one of the great gems in the pantheon of Spider-Books that have graced store shelves over the years: **THE SLINGERS!**

Hailing from a decade lovingly referred to as the '90s and a story called "Identity Crisis", The Slingers began as a set of new heroic alter egos developed by Peter Parker and Mary Jane Watson after The Amazing Spider-Man was framed for murder, and a five million-dollar bounty was put on his head.

Wanting to fight crime without an additional target on his back, Peter and MJ designed four new costumed identities – Hornet, Ricochet, Dusk and Prodigy. The bounty was eventually rescinded and the true perpetrator revealed, so Peter redonned the webs. He discarded the costumes, which soon found their way to four new owners, all inspired by the heroes of the Marvel Universe to make a difference.

I don't know about you, but I can't think of a better group of guest stars for the theme of **LEGACY**. How will Ben react to seeing four other players on the board who, like him, find their roots in the heroic exploits of Peter Parker? Keep reading to find out, True Believers!

But existential crises are nothing new for Ben Reilly! Why, just last month in **BEN REILLY: THE SCARLET SPIDER #6** and **#7**, Peter, Will, Jason and Joe told a two-part tale that ranks among my favorite Ben Reilly stories EVER, in which we learned that Ben is a struggle against his nature for the fate of his very soul!

And looking at the mailbag here in the Spidey office, I wasn't the only one who dug it! Let's see what you Mighty Marvelites had to say!



Hey there!

Here's a "G'Day" all the way from Australia. As a longtime PAD fan and a

relatively recent Scarlet Spider-convert, I was pretty excited to see them brought together. It's great to finally get a mission statement for the book—literally saving Ben Reilly's soul. I was worried for a couple of issues, but I shouldn't have been. Mr. David always has a goal in mind. His long-term plans are almost Claremontian, which I mean as the highest possible compliment.

Classic suit or the new one, scars or fresh faced, Ben's been looking great, and I hope his newfound quest for redemption has him meet up with some of the other members of the Spider-Family (or the lesser known Marvel heroes in general). Particularly Cindy Moon A.K.A. SILK, who seems to be in limbo at the moment. C'mon Peter, we know you can do her justice. Ben, Kaine AND Cindy? It writes itself, yeah?

With Peter off being a genius billionaire playboy philanthropist, it's great to have a Spider-Book staying weird and wacky. Keep it up. And thank you for doing a great job.

Scott G.
New South Wales
Australia

Glad you're picking up what we're putting down, Scott, and welcome to the Spider-Family! Now go throw me a shrimp on the barbie!

Hi there, Spider-Team,

I just wanted to take a minute to let you know how much I enjoyed **BEN REILLY: THE SCARLET SPIDER #7**. I've always had a soft spot for Ben and Kaine, and Peter David had me worried that maybe Kaine was going to be sidelined once again. I was so glad to see that Ben is starting to redeem himself after that run as the Jackal, and I agree that keeping Kaine around is just what is needed to keep him on the right path.

And of course, Will Slaney's art was great as usual.

Keep up the great work!
Geoffrey H.
Helmetta, NJ

Hey, Geoff! Thanks for reading, man, and glad you're digging where we're taking Ben! One thing you and Scott both hit on in your letters is that Peter's always got a plan, and, LET ME TELL YOU, that is truer with this book than it ever was! Peter has plans for Kaine, Cassandra, Aunt June, the whole gang.

He's got a few other tricks up his sleeves, as well, but I won't say

much beyond that. Wouldn't want to ruin the MYSTERY—oh, look at the time. Better move on to our next letter!

Hi there,

When I first picked up this series with #1 I thought, "Oh, this will be aesthetically pleasing. Ben Reilly always had the coolest costume of all the Spider-Men."

I really wasn't expecting much from the story. It definitely took a few issues for Peter David to get into the groove of things, wanting to do the three-people-in-one with the first issue and maybe emulating Deadpool a little too much, but now it has become my favorite publication out there.

Ben seems like his own character now. Still kind of dark and mopey as he was in the '90s, and now he has developed his own style of humor that has me chuckling from page to page. Ben is still finding and creating a new identity for himself, and I am anxious to see where that takes him. His wanting to sacrifice himself for Kaine (whose fight scenes have been both exciting and hilarious) in issue #7 was an unexpected and heartfelt move. I highly look forward to reading more of this series. One question though: will the destruction of Las Vegas in "Secret Empire" come into play in this series?

Thanks and keep up the great work,
Luke F.
Florissant, MO

Ben Reilly has been a favorite character of mine since I was a kid. I'm so excited after this latest issue, knowing Ben is turning back to the hero's path. I can't wait to see what's coming next! Possibly a bottle of blond hair dye?

Keep up the great work, guys!
Mitch
Austin, TX

Thanks, fellas! Not sure about the blond, Mitch, but maybe the mullet'll make a comeback. What do you think, Clone-Heads?

So, a couple weeks ago, I sent you guys and gals an email. I just wanted you all to know today is my birthday and you guys actually brought me to tears of joy.

As if you read my letter and then wrote the issue, Ben found the light in his heart again, showing the quality of a true hero. This little '90s guy can't thank

you enough for his hero back. I could literally hug you all. I can't wait to read his story of redemption.

Your friendly neighborhood Spider-Fan,
Jorden Alexander G.

**Sorry for making you cry, Jorden!
And on your birthday, no less! Man,
we're stinkers, huh?**

Thanks for reading!

Dear Spider-Office,

I fell in love with Ben Reilly at the age of eleven. As I enjoyed SPIDER-MAN: THE ANIMATED SERIES, I went to my comic book store and bought my first comic book: VENOM SUPER SPECIAL #1: PLANET OF THE SYMBIOTES PART 3. I had no idea who the Scarlet Spider was, but one of the interior panels described Ben as being the original Spider-Man, and he immediately became my favorite character. His struggles with his identity--finding himself and his place in the world--resonated with me. I came to enjoy the flipbook solo story that featured him fighting a redesigned Lizard more than the symbiote story, and the rest is history. I bought up everything I could that featured the Scarlet Spider and, later, the New Spider-Man as he came to be called.

When they killed Ben off, I dropped Spider-Man comics. I know they did so to restore the status quo for those who had felt betrayed with replacing Peter, but I felt betrayed. Ben was--is--my Spider-Man. I returned for the Spider-Girl series and came back to AMAZING sporadically over the years when they hinted Ben's possible return (SPIDER-ISLAND, SPIDER-VERSE, Kaine's SCARLET SPIDER series), but otherwise, I refused to read the main book unless they brought Ben back.

When they announced THE CLONE CONSPIRACY, I knew from the teaser image that Ben was wearing the Jackal mask. I wasn't in love with the idea, but I figured it was just some plot point to get him back--it didn't matter how, I was just glad he was coming back.

I, like many Reilly fans, waited 20 years for his proper return. I must say though, I was disappointed with THE CLONE CONSPIRACY and Ben's portrayal in the event. It didn't feel like the Ben that returned was my Ben. Still, after 20 years of waiting, I decided to stick it out and follow his new solo series. I didn't think he could be redeemed, and I wasn't a huge fan of the first six issues. However, after reading issue #7, honestly, it's like I'm eleven all over again. Thank you. Great job beginning the journey for his redemption--I didn't think it could be done, but it works. I now (finally) have a book to look forward to being pulled again.

Now, you better not cancel Ben's run like you did Kaine's book! But if you

must do so, please don't kill Ben off again. I'm not waiting another 20 years!

Andre

Hi, Andre. Thanks for your letter and for caring as much about this character as you do. Ben was my Spider-Man too, and I know just how you feel! BLUE HOODIE SQUAD 4 EVA.

Sorry to hear that you were disappointed with THE CLONE CONSPIRACY. Personally, I think it stands as one of the best Ben Reilly stories to date, especially if you can read the story and its tie-ins in their entirety.

Did you read AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #22 from Dan Slott and Giuseppe Camuncoli? If not, it sounds like it'd be just the type of story you'd enjoy! It's a great one-and-done that gives a bit of context about where Ben's been for these past several years and why his motivations have changed so much since we last saw him. Maybe they've got it in the back issues at your local shop!

And if you, or any of you readers out there, want to keep Ben's story going, go to your comic shop and add the issue to your pull list! If you don't have a pull list, ask your shop about 'em! I'm sure they'd be happy to help!

Dear Spider-Office,

I'm really enjoying the new SCARLET SPIDER series. Peter David and Mark Bagley are two of my favorite creators, and I first got into American comics during the original CLONE SAGA, so it's great to see Ben Reilly back in action, especially now that he's gone back to his original costume.

Just a minor nitpick about issue #6 though: you can't shock a flatline! Basically, fibrillation means that the heart is quivering like jelly rather than beating normally. The defibrillator's purpose is stop this fibrillation by stopping the heart; with luck, it will then start up again with a normal rhythm. However, you can't stop something that's already stopped. On the plus side, the electric shock didn't actually revive Abigail, so this isn't exactly a mistake in the story.

John K.

I'm torn, John. You're not wrong that we goofed on fibrillation, and you go on to explain why it isn't a glaring error in the story, but I don't quite know if this would qualify you for a No-Prize, as you did not explain why the use of the paddles themselves wasn't an error in the story.

Hmmm... I say we leave the decision to your fellow Spider-Fans! Tell us what you think, readers! If John deserves a No-Prize, let us know,

and we'll print one for him in our next letter column!

Regardless of what your fellow readers say about the No-Prize, John, thanks for reading, and for keeping us honest about fibrillation!

Hello there, I'm a longtime Marvel fan and wanted to give everybody at Marvel a big virtual high five! *high fives* O

kay now that that's out of the way, I wanted to give you guys a huge shout out on how the SCARLET SPIDER is turning out so far. I loved THE CLONE CONSPIRACY and it left me wanting more, and the SCARLET SPIDER definitely delivers! The end of issue #6 left me looking like the cover of #7. I can't wait to read more. Keep up the amazing work. *thwip*

Terry Dactyl

HIGH FIVE, TERRY! Thanks for readin'!

I recently came back to Marvel to read Scarlet Spider and Venom (now that he is back with Eddie). I am a big Spider-fan from back in the '90s, and, boy oh boy, have you done right by Scarlet Spider here.

Just want to say, job well done, and keep up the great work!

TC

Thanks for readin', TC! Glad you're digging what we're doing with Ben and Venom, and hope you like what we've got in store for both of 'em in the coming months!



PHIEW! That's all the space we've got for this one, Spider-Philes, but keep readin' and keep sendin' those letters!

VIVA THE BLUE HOODIE!
Devin

@edevinlewis



ISSUE #10 ON SALE NEXT MONTH!